معمولاتِ یومیہ

A DAILY PROGRAM

of

Dhikr and *Du'a*

being

A Short Course

in

Self Correction

by

Dr. Muhammad Abdul Hai Arifi

foreword by

Maulana Muhammad Taqi Usmani

English Version prepared by

Muhammad Shameem

IDARATUL-MA'ARIF

Karachi, Pakistan.

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FOREWORD

Dr. Muḥammad Abdul Ḥai Arifi

A twentieth century man of Allah

Having lived a whole life devoted to obeying and knowing Allah, Dr. 'Abdul Hai 'Arifi is a particularly gifted successor to the spiritual legacy of Maulana Ashraf 'Ali Thanavi. Allah Almighty gave him the will and the ability to invite people to the true faith during this age so tragically denuded of men with spiritual excellence. Trained by Maulana Thanavi himself, he was able to share his master's spiritual graces and insights with those who attended his weekly series of addresses.

It was on the 21st of Jumada al-Thaniyyah, 1398 A.H. when he recommended to his circle of listeners a brief but comprehensive course in Self Correction telling them what they should do every day as part of their routine of life. Since this Course is very useful for all who seek and take the trouble of traversing the track of truth, we who have been serving his mission thought of publishing it. Now, it is after his permission and revision that we are doing so for the benefit of the larger Muslim community. May Allah give all of us the perfect ability to put it into practice fully and fruitfully. *Amin.*

Muḥammad Taqi 'Usmani

INTRODUCTION

In our previous sittings I have been talking to you about the real nature of *Taṣawwuf* and *Ṭarîqat*. I had said that Allah Almighty has given to His servants two kinds of commandments, that is, those which ask us to do something and those which tell us not to do something. Some of these commandments pertain to what man does outwardly. These commandments are commonly recognized as the 'Sharî'ah', for example, the obligation of *Ṣalâh, Ṣawm, Ḥajj* and *Zakâh* and the unlawfulness of liquor, interest, fornication etc. Similarly, some commandments pertain to what one does inwardly, for example, patience (*ṣabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), trust in God (*tawakkul*) and sincerity (*ikhlâṣ*) and other graces of behaviour which are all obligatory; or, envy (*ḥasad*), miserliness (*bukhl*), hypocricy (*riyâ'*), arrogance (*takabbur*) and other disgraces of behaviour which are all forbidden.

I have also told you earlier that inward human deeds are, in reality, the foundation of what man does outwardly. If one is rich in inward merits, specially if one has made the effort to have his evil traits of character corrected, then, in all likelihood, his outward deeds also get to be correct. Otherwise, one who carries with him the vices and weaknesses of inward deeds will find his outward deeds remaining equally defective for ever. So, it is very necessary that every conscious and determined seeker of the way of Truth, in fact, it is necessary for every Muslim that he should correct and civilize his inner self. This is the reason why a lot of hard work is done initially by those who follow one of the many ways or *Ṭarîqahs*. The purpose is self-correction following which it becomes easy to practice and observe all injunctions of the Faith. Therefore, once you need to treat the diseases of the self, it becomes inevitable that one would, naturally, have to turn to a physician of the soul, a *Shaykh* or *Murshid*.

The form of this treatment is that the seeker (of the way out of his problem) narrates before his corrector the different states of his inward thoughts and feelings. He, in turn, suggests corrective measures and recommends precautions keeping in view his particular conditions. Howev-

er, the treatment has one condition: That the seeker should have a strong sense of belonging to and a certain temperamental compatibility with his spiritual master on whose good counsel he must act without any ifs and buts. Some times, the *Shaykh* would suggest a number of benedictory recitations (*awrâd* and *waẓâ'if*) along with corrective measures. These have a special efficacy for the seeker, for when he carries these out as part of his daily routine of life for a given period of time, the state of his heart becomes stable and rightly-oriented. Standing firm against the dissent of his self becomes easy on him. Consequently, the resulting effects of remembering and glorifying Allah (*Dhikr* and *Tasbîḥ*) start registering in a way that the state of feeling responsible before Allah at all times (*Taqwâ*) becomes firmly established in the heart.

Shaykhs of every age have laid out action plans for all seekers of spiritual realization which would help them reform their Self and chasten their moral qualities with due consideration of their state of being and temperament. In this present age, our life has become very complex. The graph of things we must do has gone up alarmingly. So, the present day seekers of Truth need ways and means which are easy and effective, something which could be practiced with

simple care and concern.

And therefore, keeping in view the busy life styles of my friends far and near, I am proposing a plan of action which is very brief, comprehensive and beneficial. Having received this calendar of spiritual activities from my revered elders, specially from my *Shaykh* and *Murshid,* Maulânâ Muḥammad Ashraf 'Alî Thânavî رَحْمَةُ اللهِ عَلَيْه , I hope and pray that *Inshallah* this will prove to be quite sufficient and effective in realizing the objective pursued.

Time is valuable, very valuable indeed, and a rare opportunity which must be seized while one lives. Every moment that passes decreases our age. Thus, whoever must get ready for the Hereafter cannot afford to wait any more. I request you to decide on working right from today and start, without delay, acting in accordance with the graded course in spiritual self-training I am proposing here. This is an alternate for long and arduous exercises in spiritual self-discipline - though brief, yet very effective and time-tested. This is something one can practice punctually with a little determination and courage. May Allah bless everyone with the ability to do so.

-- Muhammad 'Abdul Hai 'Ârifî

Suggested Daily Program of *Dhikr Du'a*

1. First of all, I request you to make a firm time-table keeping in view your pre-occupations during hours of the day and night because working in accordance with a time-table brings many blessings. A lot more gets done within lesser time and its blessedness is such that even difficult tasks turn out to be easy.

2. Bear in mind that acting in accordance with the dictates of the Sharî'ah, that is, doing what it commands you to do and abstaining from what it prohibits is obligatory under all conditions. In addition to that:

3. Observe *Ṣalâh* with *Jamâ'ah* (prayer in congregation) to the best of your ability. Avoid missing the *Jamâ'ah* in the *Masjid* without a valid excuse admitted by the Sharî'ah of Islâm. Be careful about observing the etiquettes of the *Masjid.*

4. Make the activities given here your normal practice. Carry them out after the *Fajr Salâh* or set up any other time following your convenience, with determination that you will be regular:

(A) Recitation (*Tilâwah*) of the Holy Qur'ân - one part (*Juz, Pârâ*) every day. If this is not possible, make it one half (*niṣf*). If, even that much happens to be difficult, one can recite one quarter

(*Rub'*). Do not make it less than that. Show concern and make effort to recite in accordance with the rules of recitation (*Tajwîd*) to the best of your ability. If, there comes a day when you do not get the time to recite the Qur'ân due to chance or excuse, you may make amends for this by reciting Sûratul-Ikhlâs (112) two hundred times.

(B) After finishing the recitation of the Qur'ân, read out one, if not, half stage (*manzil*) of Munâjât-e-Maqbool* daily. Also, keep the accompanying translation of prayers in view.

(C) سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ الْعَظِيْمِ : (Pure is Allah and praised is He. Pure is Allah, the Great.) 1 *Tasbîh*

(D) سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ : (Pure is Allah and to Allah belongs all praise and there is no god but Allah and Allah is great.) 1 *Tasbîh*

(E) Seeking forgiveness (*Istighfâr*) اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَّاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ: (I seek the forgiveness of Allah, my

* Munâjât-e-Maqbool is the popular name of قربت عند الله وصلوات الرسول by Maulânâ Ashraf 'Alî Thânavî which is a brief collection of prayers from the Qur'ân and *Hadîth*. Very authentic and popular for almost one hundred years, Munâjât-e-Maqbool was first edited and published by Muftî Muhammad Shafî رحمة الله عليه and is available in Arabic-Urdu version. The translator is not aware of any version which carries the English translation.

Rabb, from all sins, and to Him I turn in repentance.) 1 *Tasbîḥ*

(F) The noble *Darûd* (Praying for blessings on the Prophet of Islam) اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدِنِ النَّبِيِّ الْاُمِّيِّ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ (O' Allah, bless our leader and our master, Muḥammad, the unlettered prophet, and his children and his companions, and bless and protect them.) 1 *Tasbîḥ*

(G) لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ (There is no power and there is no strength except with Allah.) 1 *Tasbiḥ*

(H) لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ (There is no god but Allah.) - Two thousand times, or 500 times at the least.

(I) After every *Ṣalâh,* recite: Sûratul-Fâtiḥah, Âyatul-Kursî and the four *Quls* once each, and the Tasbîḥ al-Fâṭimi, which is, سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ : *Subḥânallah* -- 33 times, اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ : *Al-ḥamdulillâh* -- 33 times and اَللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ : *Allâhu-Akbar* -- 34 times.

(J) After 'Ishâ *Ṣalâh*, recite:

1. سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَبِحَمْدِهٖ سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ الْعَظِيْمِ: (Pure is Allah and praised is He. Pure is Allah, the Great.) 1 *Tasbiḥ*

2. سُبْحَانَ اللّٰهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ وَلَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَاللّٰهُ اَكْبَرُ (Pure is Allah and to Allah belongs all praise and there is no god but Allah and Allah is great.) 1 *Tasbiḥ*

3. *Istighfâr* اَسْتَغْفِرُ اللّٰهَ رَبِّيْ مِنْ كُلِّ ذَنْبٍ وَّاَتُوْبُ اِلَيْهِ (1 *Tasbiḥ*) (Trans. in 4E)

4. The noble *Darûd* اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا وَمَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدِ النَّبِيِّ الْاُمِّيِّ وَعَلٰى اٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَبَارِكْ وَسَلِّمْ (1 *Tasbîḥ*) (Trans. in 4F)

(K) When ready to sleep, recite:

(a) Âyatul-Kursî (2:255)

(b) The last verses 285, 286 of Sûrah al-Baqarah (2) from اٰمَنَ الرَّسُوْلُ (The messenger has believed) to the end.

(c) The last verses of Sûrah Âl-'Imrân (3:190-194) from اِنَّ فِيْ خَلْقِ السَّمٰوٰتِ (Surely, in the creation of the heavens...) to لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيْعَادَ (You will not break Your promise.)

(d) Sûratul-Mulk (تَبَارَكَ الَّذِيْ) (67:1-30) - once

(e) Sûratul-Ikhlâṣ (112) - 100 times (If not, do it 33 times, or make it 11 times at the least).

(f) Sûratul-Falaq (قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ الْفَلَقِ) (113) and Suratun-Nâs (قُلْ اَعُوْذُ بِرَبِّ النَّاسِ) (114) three times each, then, blow you breath on yourself (directly or via the palms of your hands) and make another symbolic gesture of having protected your home by using your hand to draw an imaginary line of security around it, which is referred to as *hiṣâr*. By *dam* (دم: pronounced as in 'gum'), one protects the body and by *hiṣâr* (حصار) , the house.

Besides applying yourself to these deeds, you would do well to keep recitin لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ (There is no god but Allah) as and when you have the oppor-

tunity to do so while moving around from one place to the other. It will be good for you if you occasionally combine لَآ اِلٰہَ اِلَّا اللّٰہُ with مُحَمَّدٌ رَّسُوْلُ اللّٰہِ in your recital. In addition to this, please say the noble *Darûd* as many times as possible. Make this recital a constant practice. This is the root of what is known as *Dhikr*. (The English translation of *Dhikr* - 'remembrance' - does not carry the full meaning of this many faceted Islamic terminology.)

This *Dhikr* or the act of remembering could be simply verbal at the initial stage. But, once you get into the habit of doing it, a time will soon come, *Inshallâh,* when you will be blessed with the unique attainment that the *Dhikr* of Allah will penetrate the deepest recesses of your heart, remain in there and keep releasing its fragrance beat by beat despite your verbal and physical pre-occupation with some other subject or activity.

5. There are many authentic prayers which have provenly reached us as the blessed practice of the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰہُ عَلَیْہِ وَسَلَّمَ , for instance, the prayer when you sit to eat, the prayer when you enter the *masjid* and the prayer when you come out of it, the prayer when you go to sleep, the prayer when you wake up and many others. Memorize these and make a habit of saying them

as and when called for during the different timings of the day and night. Some of these prayers appear towards the end of this presentation.

6. Once in a while, make time and go and sit in the company of men of Allah. Even in your normal socialization, it will be beneficial if you would, as far as you can, keep in closer touch with pious people who follow the *sunnah* of the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ in their lives. Seek their good counsel and ask them to pray for you.

7. You should keep the *Mawâ'iẓ* and *Malfûẓât* of Maulânâ Ashraf 'Alî Thânavî and his book, "Tarbiyatus-Sâlik", under regular study. This humble writer has given a gist of these in two of his books entitled, Ma'athir-e-Hakîmul-Ummat and Basâ'ir-e-Ḥakîmul-Ummat. Study these as well, a little every day, even if it be a page. This will increase your knowledge and freshen it, and it will also motivate and prompt you to act in earnest.

Please bind yourself with these few items of daily doings, that is, put these on top of your daily engagements and make yourself do these regularly with full personal concern. Please see that you give priority to these things you have to do over other matters of interest. This is because it is not appropriate to cut these suggested items of

spiritual activity any more shorter than they already are. For your information, all these things which should be done originate from the blessed words and deeds of the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمْ and are authentic.

After this, I tell you about some *Waẓâ'if.* Do not make them compulsory on yourself, but do have the intention that you will do these regularly to the best of your ability. Let me sound a word of caution. Please do not start off by making all these supplementary daily acts compulsory for yourself under the heat of excessive enthusiasm for the program, something you may leave off when that enthusiasm cools off. This is because abandoning recommended acts (*mustaḥabbat*), after having made them part of your regular routine, is very harmful as stated in *Ḥadith*. The danger here is that man's desiring self and the Shaytan, who have made one abandon an act which was *mustaḥabb,* might conspire to get, God knows what else, abandoned by him. But, for anyone who embarks on the spiritual path, it is extremely necessary that he does his best to honour and execute recommended or desirable deeds and recognises the worth and value of going through them. Therefore, when it comes to taking to desirable deeds, make some of them a regular feature of your daily routine; be particular about

some others to the best of your ability; and for those one cannot be particular about, one should consider it a great blessing from Allah if one is able to do them whenever he gets an opportunity to do so. In this there is nothing but good.

Some special deeds which are important intrinsically and in which you may engage yourself on a daily basis are as follows:

1. The *Ṣalâh* of *Tahajjud* (12 *Raka'ât*; or a minimum of 4 *Raka'ât*): It is better to perform it during the later part of the night. However, until such time that you get into the habit of rising during the later part of the night, you should offer 4 *Raka'ât* with the intention of performing *Tahajjud* (*Ṣalâtul-Layl*) in between the *Farḍ* and *Witr* of *Ṣalâtul-'Ishâ*. While doing so, you should look forward to, with the best of your determination and courage, making serious effort to perform *Tahajjud* late in the night.

2. The set of Twelve *Tasbîḥât* which are as follows:

	Number of *Tasbîḥ*	Times
لَا إِلٰهَ إِلَّا اللهُ (*La ilâha Illallâhu*)	2	200
إِلَّا اللهُ (*Illallâhu*)	4	400
اَللهُ اَللهُ [*Allâhu Allâh* --	6	600

pronouncing *dammah* (ُ:û) on the *hâ* sound in

the first word and a pause on it in the second.]

اَللّٰهْ (*Allâh*) 1 100

Actually, these are thirteen, but they have come to be known as Twelve *Tasbîḥât*. Their normal time of recital is soon after the *Ṣalâḥ* of *Tahajjud*, but, should it be difficult to go through them at that time, they can be done after the *Ṣalah* of *Fajr*.

3. The *Ṣalâh* of *Ishrâq*, the *Ṣalâh* of *Ḍuḥâ* (*Châsht*), The *Ṣalâh* of *Awwâbîn* and four *Raka'ât* of *Nafl Ṣalâh* before the obligatory *Ṣalâh* of *'Aṣr* and *'Ishâ*.

4. Sûrah Yâsîn (36:1-83) and Sûrah al-Muzzammil (73:1-20) any time during the day at personal convenience.

5. Reciting of Sûrah al-Kahf (18:1-110) on Friday.

6. The *Ṣalâh* of *Tasbîḥ* - once a week.

7. Reciting of Sûrah al-Fâtiḥah 41 times in between the *Sunnah* and *Farḍ Ṣalâh* of *Fajr*. Add the noble *Darûd* 11 times each before and after it. This is a wonderful prescription for the soul which, if pursued regularly, unties many a knot. This has been a part of the daily practice of a majority of pious elders. If, for any reason, this cannot be done between the *Farḍ* and *Sunnah* of

Fajr, do it after the *Fajr Ṣalâh*. After having finished the suggested recitation, blow your breath on your chest.

An important note of warning

While taking to the *Awrâd* and *Waẓâ'if* mentioned above on a regular basis, let this be very clear in your mind that all *Adhkâr* and *Awrâd* simply help one to achieve the objective. The real objective is the pleasure of Allah for which it is necessary that one achieves the quality of *Taqwâ*, and *Taqwâ* comes out of the effort to inculcate good morals and to abstain from the bad ones. It is only for this purpose that seekers of the spiritual path are exposed to a series of preparatory exercises known as *Mujâhidah* which literally means 'striving'. As for the achievement of having the pleasure of Allah, it is inevitable that one makes considered effort to stay away from the commission of sins, fulfils all rights due on him, maintains an attitude of truth and honesty in transactions, practices simplicity and cleanliness in social living and that he is temperamentally soft-spoken and pleasant in manners. Unless one makes an effort to arm himself with these qualities, striving in the way of Allah spiritually remains for him an exercise in futility. Not simply that one fails to achieve the objective of his search, he stays deprived of the chances of reaching his real destination. So, do not take these

Awrâd and *Waẓâ'if* as sufficient by themselves and do not become complacently care-free thereby. Instead of that, keep making a constant survey of your life. Do not abandon the quest for self-correction right upto your last breath, for the evils of human self could lie undetected for years and years together. Strictly guard your eye and your ear and your tongue. These three human organs are the fountain of all acts of worship and the active instruments of all sins as well. They are the motivating agents of all inmost deeds, be they good or bad. Therefore, watching over them, that is, the thought of using them lawfully or otherwise, should be foremost in your mind. This is important and should not be compromised. If and when you make a mistake, waste no time, repent. To use the words of a poet, let me say: 'Close your eyes, close your ears and close your lips too / If you do not see the light of Truth, you can laugh at me.'

Please note that you can increase or decrease the number and frequency of these *Awrâd* and *Waẓâ'if* keeping in view the time available with you and the factors of personal courage and health. But, do keep your dealings clean, your social living purified and your morals chastened - a concerted effort to see that this happens is necessary under all conditions.

Finally, that which makes all these acts of devotion trustworthy and authentic is the act of following the *Sunnah*, the Way of the Prophet of Mercy, may the blessings of Allah be upon him and may He protect him. The more care and concern you show for it, the closer you shall get to Allah. The measure of your shortfall on that count will be the measure of your deprivation. So, it is all the more necessary that our lives be cast into the mould of *Sunnah*, which we must follow by design and effort. *Sunnah* could be legislational, or habitual (including all acts of worship, obedience to Allah and transactions with human beings; or, daily life, home, food, dress, style). Show care for and interest in all of them to the limit of making them an integral part of your life (details of which are available in my book, Uswa-e-Rasûl-e-Akram in Urdu, or in its English translation). *Sunnah* is something free from Self and Satan. If one succeeds in following the noble Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ, even if it be in form only, there is every hope that, *Inshallah,* that very act of following him will not only be acceptable with Allah, but will also become deserving of His fond attention.

Intention

The intention in carrying out all these *Awrâd* and *Waẓâ'if* should be none other than having the

pleasure and proximity of Allah. Human deeds could be outward or inward. In the case of a Muslim man or woman, these operate under a criterion. That trustworthy criterion is nothing but his or her intention. The more correct and strong the intention, corresponding rewards and blessings will register against his or her deeds.

BASIC DEEDS OF THE HEART

All daily deeds hitherto mentioned are outward deeds which play an effective role in reforming your inward state of being. So, we now take up what is to be done inwardly. However, it must be conceded at the very outset that inward deeds are many in number and they have to be formally acquired by living under the supervision of a perfect Shaykh. But, out of these, I tell you about four deeds which are the core of a whole range of Divine injunctions, that is, they are *Farḍ* and *Wâjib* (obligatory). These are not only the basis of mysticism (تصوف : *Taṣawwuf*) upto a certain extent, and of outward deeds, but they are, in fact, the very moving spirit and foundation of the Faith as a whole. When practiced, they are easy and almost electronically effective. This is sheer mercy from Allah that there are no set timings or conditions for these deeds. One can

act according to them under all conditions whether moving around or sitting still. The key is to get into the habit. *Inshallâh,* by acquiring the habit of doing these deeds, and of constancy in it, many evil traits of character will automatically become weakened and subdued and there will be many good traits which will be energized and strengthened. These four deeds are as follows:

1. GRATITUDE (*Shukr*)
2. PATIENCE (*Ṣabr*)
3. SEEKING OF FORGIVENESS FROM ALLAH (*Istighfâr*)
4. SEEKING THE PROTECTION OF ALLAH (*Isti'âdhah*)

1. GRATITUDE (*Shukr*)

First of all, when you get up in the morning and before you go to sleep in the night, cast a casual look at yourself and at what is around you, think of the blessings of worldly life and of the Faith bestowed on you by Allah and be prompt in expressing your overall gratitude. In addition to that, you will do well to offer special thanks from the deepest recesses of your heart for the Faith you have been blessed with and for the protection that you enjoy. Concurrently then, let there be a

solemn resolve in your heart that you will always make the most correct use of these blessings.

Besides this, whenever and whatever blessing you come to think of, quietly thank Allah for it right there in your heart:

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ اَللّٰهُمَّ لَكَ الْحَمْدُ وَلَكَ الشُّكْرُ ط

All praise belongs to Allah. O Allah, for You is all praise and for You, all gratitude.

For example, something turns out to be as you wished, or some prayer is answered, or you have something which makes you happy, or there happens something you are pleased with, or for any good deed that you have been enabled to do - think of it and thank for it in the heart of your hearts. Even if you come to a point when, God forbid, you are afflicted with some pain or distress, you should, before you do something about it, cast a glance at all those blessings Allah has surrounded you with, inspite of the fact that you hardly had any right to deserve these. These very blessings give strength to your heart. Had they not been there, what would have been the level and intensity of your pain and distress? *Inshallâh,* this meditation (مراقبہ : *muraqaba*) will bring peace of mind to you, at least rationally.

May be, the effect of pain or distress still lingers physically. But, there is no exaggeration in saying that countless blessings of Allah wait on us all the time. If one cannot possibly thank for all of them, he would, at the least, be able to pay his debt of gratitude for some of them. By constantly practicing in this manner, one becomes so used to being thankful that he keeps thanking for everything good he has or gets, right there in his heart. How interesting that nobody knows what is happening in his heart, yet, a great act of worship keeps being performed there! You simply cannot imagine the raise in ranks it brings for you. In short, man should aspire to remain grateful under all circumstances. Perhaps, in the beginning, this may appear to be difficult, but, by practicing and by remaining conscious of it under most conditions, you get used to it.

This act of being grateful is something Allah demands of you in every department of Faith, and on it, He promises blessings which have no end. Gratefulness generates love for Allah Almighty. Relationship with Him becomes stronger. One starts feeling the taste of being content in one's condition and life becomes free from unwelcome burdens. It is also the benediction of this

act of grace that a grateful man very seldom falls into sin, and fateful spiritual diseases such as arrogance, envy, greed, avarice, extravagance and miserliness leave him untouched.

2. PATIENCE (*Ṣabr*)

This inward deed is very crucial and hard to carry out. It requires a high level of striving in maintaining a balance in the universe of relationships. Here, Allah puts man to test, the test which shows the strength of his belief. There are so many things which keep happening in our lives, things which we do not welcome and things which are hard to bear. These could be the tragedy of a personal loss, or the shock caused by sickness, distress or death of a relative or friend; or one may be disturbed by a loss of money or office; or one may simply come under pressure from the scruples of his own self. In short, everything which renders the peace of one's heart into shambles becomes a test for his patience. But, because it is non-voluntary, it is obligatory to believe that it is from Allah for it is all mixed with many a wisdom and mercy. On occasions such as these, Allah Almighty has Himself, in His grace, suggested a wonderfully fast-working treatment for your peace of heart and mind, that is, you should

promptly say:

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ ۝

To Allah we belong and to Him we are to return.

Rationally, it brings peace; and physically, it increases the strength to bear by pain. So, irrespective of whether one suffers from some big shock or encounters some insignificant unpleasantness, it is advisable to recite إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ (To Allah we belong and to Him we are to return) repeatedly on such occasions. How necessary this act is can be proved by *Ḥadîth* narrations which say if one remembers a past event and recites these words, he gets the same reward as one gets at the time of the actual event. It appears in *Aḥâdîth* that the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّآ إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُوْنَ (To Allah we belong and to Him we are to return) even at the temporary going out of the lamp because this act becomes the recipient of what has been promised by the Word of Allah:

أُولٰٓئِكَ عَلَيْهِمْ صَلَوَاتٌ مِّنْ رَّبِّهِمْ وَرَحْمَةٌ وَأُولٰٓئِكَ هُمُ الْمُهْتَدُوْنَ ۝

These are the people on whom there are blessings from their Lord, and mercy. And these are the people who are on the straight path. (2:157)

This is the act for which Allah has promised His company by saying: 'We are with the patient.' He has also given good news to the practitioners of patience that they have His blessings and His very special mercy and also the Word of Allah that they are the finest actualizers of His guidance. This act of patience enriches one's life with the dignity of steadfastness, discipline and forbearance. It generates the ability to withstand all sorts of misfortunes and calamities. This ability to remain pleased with what has been ordained for man is, in itself, a very high station of true worshipfulness and endurance. The practitioners of patience never act under emotions of anger and revenge against anyone just to oblige their self.

3. SEEKING FORGIVENESS FROM ALLAH (*Istighfâr*)

The third act is *Istighfâr.* This act of seeking forgiveness from Allah is also a very important inward deed for which there is no fixed time, yet it is needed all the time. The human heart is under constant pressure from the urges of sin and the surges of immoral thoughts - and God knows how many flashes of each criss-cross it all the time and how many sins get to be committed con-

sciously and inadvertently. There are some sins which get committed without our realizing that this has happened, or we just do not take them to be sins. Under all such conditions, once a person becomes aware of having committed a sin at whatever time it be, he should immediately turn to Allah right there in his heart with a genuine sense of shame and repentance and say: أَسْتَغْفِرُاللّٰه (*Astaghfirullâh*): 'O Allah, I am really ashamed. Please forgive me and keep me protected against it in the future.' Or, say:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِىْ

(*Allâhummaghfirlî*)

O Allah, forgive me.

رَبِّ اغْفِرْوَارْحَمْ وَاَنْتَ خَيْرُ الرَّاحِمِيْنَ○

(*Rabbighfir warham wa anta khayrur-Râhimîn*)

Forgive, (O) my *Rabb*, and have mercy and You are the best of those who are merciful.

This is the act which makes the modest man the object of the most perfect forgiveness and the most extensive mercy of Allah Almighty. Distilled from this heart-felt sense of shame there emerges that vital feeling of belonging to Allah in the most refined form of servitude, a power which

protects faith and places in one's heart the wealth of *Taqwâ* (the fear of Allah). A person like that would never commit a sin deliberately and would never give pain to Allah's created beings. Let Allah be thanked that He has, in His grace and mercy, bestowed upon His erring and weak servants the option of repentance and the hope of forgiveness so that they could have for themselves prosperity in the present world and salvation in the Hereafter. This is a great favour indeed.

For this, to Allah belongs all praise, and gratitude.

The Shaykhs in the Sûfî way of spiritual realization say that one should recall all major and minor sins of his past life to the best of his memory and then seeing them all as being present before him, he should hasten to repent before Allah and seek His forgiveness repeatedly with utmost remorse and humbleness as much to his heart's content as possible. This much would be sufficient. *Inshallah*, all sins will stand forgiven. After that, one should never indulge in this modality regularly which may cause him to remember these sins again and again and leave him all too

harassed. Instead of that, when he is naturally reminded of some sin, he should pray to Allah in his heart that he be forgiven. Doing it once is good enough. But, when it comes to the rights of the servants of Allah, these have to be fulfilled under all circumstances, to the best of your capability by any legitimate means at hand. It is obligatory that these be either fulfilled, or forgiveness be sought from the holder of the right.

4. SEEKING THE PROTECTION OF ALLAH (*Isti'âdhah*)

The fourth act is *Isti'âdhah*. It means to seek refuge with Allah or to seek protection from Him. Life is no bed of roses. Things unforeseen keep happening all the time. There are accidents and shocks and disappointments round the corner. Then, there is man's own self struggling against the satan, moment after moment. With this in view, one should keep praying for Allah's protection against all such things. In human affairs, one could be locked in not too uncommon a situation in which future options may be full of dangers and one may not be able to think of a way out or any counter measures could be just out of one's control - in a time like this, the heart of man finds great strength in naturally turning to

his Lord for help and protection:

لَاحَوْلَ وَلَا قُوَّةَ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ لَامَلْجَأَ وَلَا مَنْجَأَ مِنَ اللّٰهِ اِلَّا اِلَيْهِ

> There is no might (to guarantee safety against anything evil) and there is no power (to help acquire anything good) except with the help of Allah. There is nowhere to go and there is no refuge from Allah unless it be towards Him.

That is, it is not possible to stay safe from anything evil, nor is it possible to acquire anything good without the help of Allah. There is no place of escape and no refuge from Allah except in Him.

For example, there are many matters relating to one's life in the world, or one's faith in the Hereafter. If, in them, there is an apprehension of acute harm, or that of financial loss, or of some sickness or distress; or it may be a nagging concern about a job cut or business slump; or it may be the pressure of an impending failure in some objective or project; or one may anticipate danger to his life or property at the hands of an adversary, or from anyone else holding a grudge against him; or it may be some outward or inward sin under the instigation of *Shaytân*, or

one's own fickle self; or one may be afraid of being called to account in matters relating to his Faith; or, it may just be any other impure thought crossing one's heart. When confronted with any of the above conditions, one should lose no time, turn immediately to Allah, and pray to Him that he be protected. Let one say words to the effect that he is earnestly seeking forgiveness, then recite the noble *Darûd* and also recite one of the following prayers:

١- اَللّٰهُمَّ اعْصِمْنِىْ مِنَ الشَّيْطٰنِ ط

1. O Allah, protect me from the *Shaytân.*

٢- اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىٓ اَسْئَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ ط

2. O Allah, from You I seek Your grace.

٣- اَللّٰهُمَّ عَافِنَا وَاعْفُ عَنَّا ط

3. O Allah, bless us with well-being and forgive us.

٤- يَاحَىُّ يَا قَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ اَسْتَغِيْثُ ط

(*Yâ Haiyyu Yâ Qaiyyûmu bi-rahmatika astaghîth*)

4. O the Living, O the Self Sustaining, Sustainer of all I humbly turn towards Your mercy for help.

When you have finished with your set morning routine of recitals, it is better to also pray to the following effect:

Ya Allah, help me with Your grace and mercy and keep me and my family protected against all sorts of physical and spiritual worries, and save me from everything indecent and forbidden, and from the evils of Self and Shaytân, and from accidents and calamities originating from the earth or the heavens, and from all kinds of grave situations, and from sicknesses and infirmities, and rescue me from every hurt or harm that may come from people - and bless me with Your protection at all times and under all situations. *Âmîn*.

Or, better say it in the words used by the Holy Prophet, Muhammad ﷺ :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیۡ اَعُوْذُ بِكَ مِنْ شُرُوْرِ اَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ اَعْمَالِنَا. اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّیۡ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ جَمِيْعِ الْفِتَنِ مَاظَهَرَ مِنْهَا وَمَا بَطَنَ. اَعُوْذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللّٰه التَّآمَّاتِ كُلِّهَا مِنْ شَرِّمَا خَلَقَ. وَاُفَوِّضُ اَمْرِیۡ اِلَى اللّٰهِ، اِنَّ اللّٰهَ بَصِيْرٌۢ بِالْعِبَادِ ○

Ya Allah, I seek protection from You against the evils of our selves and the evils of our deeds. O Allah, I seek protection from You against all temptations and disasters whether open or hidden. I seek protection through the most perfect

> words of Allah against the evil which may come from His created beings, and I entrust all matters of mine with Allah. Surely, Allah is all-aware of His servants.

This is the act which enables a servant of Allah to witness the greatness of Allah, His Lord-worthiness and His all-mercifulness, when his heart receives from Allah Almighty the assurance of being under protection, and at peace. Persons like these are endowed with the quality of placing their trust in Allah, and leaving matters in His charge, a great wealth indeed. Such people never hurt anyone. They just do not have the heart for it.

Besides what has been stated above, if one is faced with some other problem for which there appears to be just about no solution, I would like to give you the recipe in the words of my teacher and master who used to say: "Do not think about it. Just start praying within your heart. Say:

إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ۝

You alone we worship and from You alone we seek help.

Say it within your heart, say it repeatedly with your heartbeat. *Inshallâh,* you shall get rid of the concern for the problem. You will be at peace, and your problem will be resolved smooth-

ly and easily."

The reality is that these four deeds are of such magnitude that the moment any one of these is activated by some incentive, it instantly blesses one with the ability to turn to Allah which, to say the least, is a Divine gift that abides for ever.

For all these four deeds, it is good to form an intention in advance. It is still better if you could renew your intention once in a while thinking that the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has taught us to do so, and that he has not only laid great stress on them but that he has himself done this almost always. Then, as a benediction of following what the noble prophet said and did, this deed of your will, *Inshallâh,* be acceptible with Allah, and lovable too. This will be, let us say, نُوْرٌ عَلٰى نُوْرٍ : Light upon light!

INTROSPECTION AND MEDITATION

A summary meditation over these four deeds can be included in your daily time-table set for this purpose in the following manner:

1. FOR THE PAST: Repent and Seek Allah's Forgiveness. Let it be heart-felt, almost passionate remorse causing the fullest emotional release over the thought of all outward and inward, open

and hidden sins. Then, consider and make serious effort to make amends for *Farâ'id* and *Wâjibât* (obligatory acts of worship) which you have missed, and for this pray to Allah for His forgiveness and acceptance.

2. FOR THE PRESENT: Fulfill the Obligation of Gratitude by:

A. Thanking for blessings you enjoy now, whether around you or in you, and thanking Allah for them sincerely, out of the deepest recesses of your heart, then, praying that Allah helps you in your determination to make use of them correctly, and grants you perfect security in life.

B. Being patient and forbearing over hardships and unpleasant happenings thinking that they are nothing but mercy from Allah, then praying that Allah enables you to stay pleased with what He decides for you, and that He bestows on you the very beauty of ideal endurance, and that He enriches you with real peace of heart and mind.

3. FOR THE FUTURE: Pray for protection from Allah.

A. There are so many things in life against which one needs protection. It could be the very fear of a change for the worse in your life, or that there may be mishaps and accidents. Or, you

may be worried about remaining a loser in the present world as well as in the world-to-come. Or, you may be worried about the evil designs of Self and *Shaytân* and about the dangers hidden behind your own negligence caused by a life full of material enjoyments. For all such worries, seek from Allah refuge and protection against all that threatens or bothers you.

B. Then, pray that Allah grants you prosperity and real success in both the worlds, the *Dunyâ* and the *Âkhirah,* and that He bestows on you the bliss of an end which is the best in deeds.

Inshallâh, these very few deeds shall prove quite sufficient for success in your purpose. Let the fact that the Qur'ân and *Hadîth* command you to act likewise, strengthen your resolve, and let the merits of these deeds mentioned there become an additional incentive.

PROBLEMS IN THE PATH OF TRUTH

In addition to what has been said above, there are some particular spiritual problems which most seekers of the path of truth are confronted with. A brief explanation of these is given below. This is specially relevant in the case of those who engage themselves in *Dhikr* on a regular basis and, for that matter, it also applies to

practicing Muslims at large whose hearts experience the emotional states known as *Qabḍ* (seizure: depression) and *Basṭ* (release, elation) quite commonly, without any volition of theirs. Although, these states are transitory, yet they play a vital role in spiritual training and moral grooming. Because of these, man's spiritual potential rises to new heights and his relationship with Allah gets stronger.

1. THE STATE OF *QABḌ:* This is a state in which the heart is seized (not in the medical sense) by a feeling of acute depression (again, not in the medical sense) and dispiritedness. Not only does one feel dejected with whatever he is doing by way of spiritual deeds, but that he also starts seeing everything else pertaining to his personal and professional life as useless. So acute becomes this state of dullness and despair that life itself appears to be a heavy burden. There are occasions when one starts nursing doubts and hesitations in crucial matters of Faith and Salvation - despite the fact that one keeps fulfilling mandatory religious obligations. When overtaken by such a state, one should keep engaged in abundant prayers seeking Allah's forgiveness and protection along with repeated recitals of the noble *Darûd* supplicating fervently for well-being from Allah. As said earlier, this state of *Qabḍ* is

simply transitory, a passing phase, but there are many spiritual gains made through it. One realizes his weakness and humility, his helplessness, his servility and virtual nihility. This is the station of *Sabr* - of patience, endurance and forbearance - for a seeker. It is here that man is blessed with the wealth of Divine company and it is here that the root of man's pride over his supposed excellences in knowing and doing things is cut asunder.

2. THE STATE OF *BASṬ*: Contrary to the state of depression, there are other times when a sense of relief, delight and openness overtakes the heart of the seeker who engages in *Dhikr* regularly. In a state like this, one becomes enthusiastically absorbed in prayers and other forms of worship and is able to witness the rewards and favours of Allah all around him. With a disposition all-elated, the heart turns aglow with spiritual lights of many shades and hues. Although, this state too is transitory, yet, the seeker in the way of Allah occupies the station of Gratitude in that state of being where he is all possessed by Divine love.

But, one should not lose sight of the fact that these states of *Qabḍ* and *Basṭ* are simply transitory and non-voluntary. Therefore, one should not bother about them rationally. Instead of that,

one should, under all conditions and circumstances, stay devoted to the performance of obligatory duties (*Farâ'iḍ* and *Wâjibât*) because that is the very objective of life.

So, the essence of what is being said here is that one should forget about the states of depression or elation (*Qabḍ* or *Basṭ*) and stay glued to one's job on hand because inward conditions are naturally prone to changes, something no human being can claim to be exempt from. Rather, the fact is that these very changes are the building blocks of moral training and grooming and of spiritual ranks that follow in their wake. Therefore, no matter what the condition, one must meet the challenge posed at that time and deliver what is due - sometimes with Patience (*Ṣabr*) and at others, with Gratitude (*Shukr*). But, one should plan nothing on his own to remove or achieve one or the other condition. The best course is to entrust one's case with Allah. This is the way of ideal peace and security. Let this be understood clearly that feeling proud over commendable deeds, and their surrounding effects, is neither befitting nor called for, nor is there any need to be disappointed over deficient deeds and their circumstantial effects, if any. Mind you that both these attitudes are highway-robbers of the spiritual quest. The real touchstone of acceptance

with Allah is the fulfillment of the injunctions of the Sharî'ah and the abstinence from sins. When the profusion of *Dhikr* and persistence in righteous deeds start producing stability and fortitude in deeds and their surrounding conditions, one is blessed with an inward connection proportionate to one's capability, knowledge and comprehension. This tunes one to obey Allah and to worship Him in a natural way the result of which is that he finds himself doing so out of love, while, at the same time, there emerges a parallel hatred for disbelief and sin in his heart. On occasions, one starts experiencing the unravelling of some spiritual insights and realities. All these are favours and rewards from Allah without any right, claim or deservedness. When this happens, it is obligatory that we should always be grateful for them.

There is yet another important thing which we must understand in this connection. This is about those ugly, disturbing and absurd thoughts which frequently overwhelm us mentally and emotionally during the state of *Ṣalâh* and *Dhikr* and, for that matter, under other common conditions as well. There is a mob of alarming temptations and threatening fears. At times, one reaches the dangerous limits of disbelief and heresey which generate doubts in faith, Islam and in mat-

ters relating to the Hereafter resulting in their outright rejection. Sometimes, the demands of the desiring self get uncontrolably activated. There are other times when one's own imperfect condition combined with failure in worldly affairs starts subjecting him to extreme despair.

Let us be very clear in our minds that all these distractions are involuntary and should be taken as nothing but Satanic instigations. So far one does not submit and act as they demand, one is never going to be answerable for them, and they are definitely no sign of having been rejected in one's search for truth. In fact, they do not cause any decrease in one's faith, nor do they make any dent in one's relationship with Allah. Rather, one is rewarded for bearing by the pain caused by the nature of these thoughts which are ugly and unpleasant. On such occasions, thoughts should be diverted to something else. Read a religious book. Take to sitting with men of Allah. Seek Allah's forgiveness and His protection a few times. *Inshallâh,* one will get rid of these doubts gradually. If, just in case, one does not get rid of them even through a whole lifetime, one hardly loses anything in the present world, or in the Hereafter - because they, being non-voluntary, carry no answerability.

In what I have said above, I have laid out before you the essence of what is known as *Tasawwuf* and *Sulûk* (mysticism and spiritual quest). This is the capital on which you build the edifice of certitude in faith, the piety of the heart and the knowledge of the self. As for now, please do not aspire for more *Waẓâ'if* and *Awrâd* (things to recite regularly). In methods suggested above, there is just no chance of remaining deprived. *Inshallâh,* everything will be achieved through these brief, yet concise deeds. Nevertheless, the condition is that one should be sincere in intention and consistent in practice because fortitude is superior to the working of miracles in our time. وَمَا تَوْفِيْقِيْٓ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ : I am unable to do anything except by the will of Allah.

THE RESOLUTION OF SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS

The need for rigorous spiritual training, the routine of set recitations, and the pre-occupation with the *Dhikr* of Allah and the aim of self-purification and moral grooming is only to help in the formation of a habit of acting freely in accordance with the injunctions of Allah (bidding and forbidding both) and the teachings of the Prophet (the following of *Sunnah*), so that the rights of Allah, the rights of one's own self and the rights of

other servants of Allah start getting fulfilled as due, easily and in accordance with the provision of the Sharî'ah. In this lies life at its best, both here in the present world as well as in the Hereafter.

Out of these, the subject of *Ḥuqûq al-'Ibâd* or the rights of the servants of Allah is very significant. We have been bound to follow the percepts of the Shari'ah in matters relating to the rights of the parents, the rights of the spouses, the rights of the children, the rights of the relatives and the rights of Muslims in general. Therefore, it should be simply to seek the pleasure of Allah that we should mete out the best possible treatment to all those related to us in one way or the other with a lot of open-heartedness, and even sacrifice, and without hoping to have something in return. Also, one should do his best to see that nobody is even slightly displeased with one's personal conduct.

کبھی بھول کر کسی سے نہ کرو سلوک ایسا
کہ جو تم سے کوئی کرتا، تمہیں ناگوار ہوتا

Never, not even inadvertently, treat anyone in a manner
Which you would have disliked, if someone tried it on you.

So, if we make a mistake about anything concerning our general circle of relationships, we

should promptly forgive and ask to be forgiven. This is what Allah and the Messenger of Allah command us to do.

It is necessary for us that we should compulsorily keep reminding those we relate with of the demands of our Faith, we should also pray to Allah that they be guided right. This too is a command of Allah and it is obligatory on us to obey it.

Important Instruction

Al-ḥamdulillâh, the time table of deeds given above is quite sufficient under most conditions for all seekers of the truth, and specially so for the mild-mannered ones. But, as I have already stated earlier that human nature harbours the kinds of evil traits which keep influencing his outward deeds and, as a result, they continue disturbing the affairs of his life to disastrous proportions. Some of these evil traits are very strong and cannot be corrected without working hard on them in a spiritually organized way. Some of these traits are: Arrogance, envy, malice, love of office, influence or wealth, anger, backbiting, evil-eyedness and sexual urges. Therefore, in order to prune, amend and bend them, it is inevitable to consult some spiritual physician. Hoping to overpower them, without formal spiritual education and training, is very difficult indeed. So, in

the Şûfî way of spiritual self-realization, the guidance of an accomplished master is considered to be a pre-requisite of the way.

In this age of ours where we see a universal scarcity of men of real spiritual qualities, the chances of finding one near at hand are slim. So, should you fail to locate a Shaykh who is a genuine follower of the Sharî'ah and *Sunnah*, then, you are advised to study "Tarbiyatus-Sâlik" (The Training of the Seeker of Truth) written by Maulânâ Ashraf 'Alî Thânavî. May Allah bless the author who has given a masterly exposition of all such chronic spiritual diseases in great details alongwith his *sunnah*-oriented method of treating them. These were almost clinically tested by him and found to be unfailing remedies in all sorts of serious emotional and spiritual imbalances. Thousands of people have benefited from his counsel and they were pleased to find themselves spiritually cured for ever. If Allah Almighty so wills, anyone who elects to act as advised there will never remain deprived of positive results.

There is another book entitled, "Başâ'ir-e-Ḥakîmul-Ummat" by this humble writer which is more or less a gist of Maulânâ Thânavî's major work cited above. This can be used as a supplementary source for the same purpose. You will do

well to keep them with you, study them carefully and keep referring to them back and forth. When you are pressed for time, you can study only a little, but, do persevere on the long run. (Incidentally, these two books are in Urdu and can be ordered from Maktaba-e-Darul-Uloom, Korangi-14, Karachi).

THE WAY OUT FOR THE GUIDELESS

If, even these books are not available or cannot be consulted due to language problem, one should, then, act according to the method suggested below. *Inshallâh,* one is bound to be cured spiritually. This seemingly modest blueprint of action has been suggested by Maulânâ Thânavî. As recorded in Ashrafus-Sawâniḥ, vol. 2, he said:

> "If a person is not attached to anyone who has achieved spiritual excellence by following the Qur'ân and Sunnah in letter and spirit (*buzurg*) nor there remains any hope of getting attached to such a guide, then, I have carved out a way for that person as well because this is the Way of Allah and no seeker of truth shall ever remain deprived of it. So, just go on learning about the necessary injunctions of the Sharî'ah. Do it yourself through study or do it by asking reliable men of knowledge as and when needed and simply keep offering your prayers and observing your fasts. If you sense that you are suffering from one of the spiritual diseases, try to treat it, as far as you can, relying on your good under-

> standing and judgement, all by yourself. Keep abstaining from major sins; for the rest, continue seeking forgiveness from Allah. Also, keep praying: '*Yâ* Allâh, help me feel and recognize the diseases of my heart and also help me understand how I can treat them. And if I do not have the ability to understand, then, let this happen without the obvious use of any method - correct all these defects just by Your grace.' Period. This too is, God willing, perfectly sufficient for your salvation - and salvation is what you want - for you have not been obligated to do anything beyond that."

Keep practicing this mode of action for an extended period of time. The mercy, grace and generosity of Allah Almighty will, *Inshallâh,* be with you and you shall find yourself spiritually cured - and this is in no way beyond the most extensive mercy of Allah Almighty.

The Essence of Mysticism

"That tiny bit of wisdom which is the essence of mysticism is: 'If you feel lazy about carrying out an act of obedience, challenge laziness and carry it out; and if you have an urge for sin, challenge the urge and stay away from that sin.'

One who can do that needs just about nothing beyond it because this very act of wisdom helps establish communion with Allah and this is his guard on duty and this is his promoter."

-- Hakîmul-Ummat Maulânâ Ashraf 'Alî Thânavî

A GOOD END

(An End with Good Deeds which abide)

"Believe in a good end to life as the most graceful and the most perfect of all blessings. Always pray for such an end, specially after the five daily prayers with exceedingly passionate entreaty and humbleness of heart. And be grateful for the faith you already have because this too is, according to the promise of Allah: لَئِنْ شَكَرْتُمْ لَأَزِيدَنَّكُمْ (If you will be grateful, I shall bless you with more - 14:7), one of the effective causes of a good end."

- From the parting instructions left by Maulânâ Thânavî

Let us, then, pray:

'*Ya* Allah, bestow on us this great wealth.

اَللّٰهُمَّ لَقِّنِّیْ حُجَّةَ الْاِیْمَانِ عِنْدَالْمَمَاتِ ط

Ya Allah, prompt us to prove our faith at the time of death.

Bless us with faith which is perfect and strong. Grant us the abounding ability to perform good deeds. And grant us the ability to stay firm in following the words and deeds of our Prophet ﷺ. And while We adhere strongly to this belief of ours, let our end come with ideal good. *Âmîn*.

يَارَبَّ الْعٰلَمِيْنَ بِحُرْمَةِ سَيِّدِالْمُرْسَلِيْنَ رَحْمَةً لِّلْعٰلَمِيْنَ شَفِيْعَ الْمُذْنِبِيْنَ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَسْلِيْمًا كَثِيْرًا ۔

Yâ Rabb al-'Âlamîn, O Lord of the worlds, by the honour of our Prophet, of prophets the foremost, mercy for all the worlds, the intercessor of all sinners, on him be the blessing of Allah, and peace and salvation, most abundantly.

SOME SPIRITUAL ASSIGNMENTS FROM THE *SUNNAH*:

[1]

The Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has said:

'For anyone who says this *Darûd*, my intercession becomes necessary:'

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ وَّعَلٰى اٰلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاَنْزِلْهُ الْمَقْعَدَالْمُقَرَّبَ عِنْدَكَ

O Allah, send blessings upon Muḥammad ﷺ and upon the family of Muḥammad ﷺ and take him to a resting place near You.

[2]

According to a narration by Sayyidnâ Abû Sa'îd al-Khudrî رَضِىَ اللّٰهُ عَنْهُ, the Holy Prophet ﷺ

said: 'One who has nothing to give in charity, he should recite this *Darûd* in his *Du'â* (prayer, supplication). That will become a source of spiritual purification for him':

اَللّٰهُمَّ صَلِّ عَلٰى مُحَمَّدٍ عَبْدِكَ وَرَسُوْلِكَ وَصَلِّ عَلَى الْمُؤْمِنِيْنَ وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ وَالْمُسْلِمِيْنَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ ط

O Allah, send blessings on Your servant and Your Messenger and send blessings on all believing men and believing women and on Muslim men and Muslim women.

[3]

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الَّذِىْ لَايَضُرُّ مَعَ اسْمِهٖ شَيْئٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ وَلَا فِى السَّمَآءِ وَهُوَالسَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ، اَعُوْذُ بِكَلِمَاتِ اللّٰهِ التَّآمَّاتِ كُلِّهَا مِنْ شَرِّمَا خَلَقَ ،

With the name of Allah, with Whose name nothing can harm or hurt in the Earth nor in the Heavens and He is All-Hearing, All-Knowing.

I seek protection with the most perfect words of Allah against the evil of everything He has created.

It appears in *Ḥadîth* that the Holy Prophet ﷺ said: 'Whoever says this prayer three times every morning and every evening of every day, he shall remain protected on that day and that night.

سَیِّدُ الاِسْتِغفار

Sayyidul-Istighfâr

The Foremost Prayer for Forgiveness.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اَنْتَ رَبِّیْ لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ خَلَقْتَنِیْ وَاَنَا
عَبْدُكَ وَاَنَا عَلٰی عَهْدِكَ وَ وَعْدِكَ مَا
اسْتَطَعْتُ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ شَرِّمَا صَنَعْتُ
اَبُوْٓءُلَكَ بِنِعْمَتِكَ عَلَیَّ وَاَبُوْٓءُ بِذَنْبِیْ
فَاغْفِرْلِیْ فَاِنَّهٗ لَایَغْفِرُ الذُّنُوْبَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ ط

O Allah, You are my *Rabb*, my sustainer and provider. There is no god worthy of worship but You. You have created me and I am Your servant, and I stand by Your covenant and Your promise to the best of what I can. I seek refuge with You from the evil of what I have done. I confess before You of Your blessings on me, an I confess my sin. So, forgive me, for no one else can forgive these sins except You.

It appears in *Ḥadîth* that a servant of Allah who prays for forgiveness in these words with his

heart behind it, with sincerity and assurance of the heart, any time during the day, he will be doubtlessly admitted to Paradise after his death. The words of this *Istighfâr* are:

يَاحَيُّ يَاقَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ اَسْتَغِيْثُ

Yâ Haiyyu, Yâ Qaiyyûmu, bi-raḥmatika astaghîth / O the one who is Alive, O the Self-Sustaining Sustainer of all, for redress, I come in pain towards Your mercy.

When worried about something, so says the *Ḥadîth*, this used to be the prayer the Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ made. Recite it again and again.

In addition to this, following the practice of the pious elders of our Faith, repeatedly recite the following noble verse (known as the *Âyah al-Karîmah* / *Âyat-e-Karîmah*) of the Qur'ân when faced with trying circumstances, such as, accidental happenings, economic or emotional worries of life, severe diseases and distresses:

لَآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ سُبْحٰنَكَ اِنِّیْ كُنْتُ مِنَ الظّٰلِمِیْنَ ۝

There is no god worthy of worship except You. Pure are You. I am but one of the sinners.

Recite this noble verse (21:87) one hundred and

eleven times - plus *Darûd* 11 times before and after it - after the 'Ishâ prayer and make *Du'â* for your needs. *Inshallâh Ta'âlâ,* you shall be delivered of your distress.

When you are in some trouble, or you fear being harmed by someone, or you are faced with a difficulty from which there seems to be just about no way out, then, recite the following prayer repeatedly and abundantly:

يَا اَللّٰهُ يَارَحْمٰنُ يَارَحِيْمُ يَاذَاالْجَلَالِ وَالْاِكْرَامِ
يَاحَيُّ يَاقَيُّوْمُ بِرَحْمَتِكَ اَسْتَغِيْثُ ط

O Allah, O All-Merciful, O Very-Merciful, O Master of all Might and Generosity, O Allah, the Alive, the Self-Sustaining Sustainer of all, for help I come in pain towards your Mercy.

Inshallâh, your worry will go away and you shall find yourself at peace.

For those belonging to a spiritual order

People who belong to a spiritual order usually maintain an affectionate bond between each other. In addition to that they remember and pray for all earlier Shaykhs of the order which helps strengthen the connection between the seeker and master all along the line.

The names of the elders of the order are recorded in what is known as the '*Shajarah*' denoting spiritual genealogy. Those attached to the order read this *Shajarah* following the practice of all present and past Shaykhs of the order for spiritual satisfaction and benefit. Those interested in details may consult the original of "Ma'mûlât-e-Yowmiyah".

Prayers of the Prophet* ﷺ

* Some of the prayers he always made are given here. These should be committed to memory and recited as and when appropriate throughout one's life.

Prayers of the Prophet ﷺ

1. The prayer on waking up from sleep:

اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْٓ اَحْيَانَا بَعْدَ مَآ اَمَاتَنَا وَاِلَيْهِ النُّشُوْرُ ط

Praised be Allah who gave us life after having given us 'death' and to Him is the Resurrection.

2. The prayer on entry into the bathroom:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ ، اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّىْٓ اَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنَ الْخُبُثِ وَالْخَبَآئِثِ ط

With the name of Allah. O Allah, I seek refuge with You from the evil *Shaytân*, the male and the female.

3. The prayer on coming out from the bath room:

غُفْرَانَكَ ، اَلْحَمْدُ لِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْٓ اَذْهَبَ عَنِّى الْاَذٰى وَعَافَانِىْ ط

I ask for Your forgiveness. Praised be Allah who delivered me from filth and granted relief to me.

4. The prayer before making *Wuḍû* :

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِيْمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful.

5. The prayer during *Wuḍû* :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اغْفِرْلِیْ ذَنْبِیْ وَ وَسِّعْ لِیْ فِیْ دَارِیْ

وَبَارِكْ لِیْ فِیْ رِزْقِیْ ط

O Allah, forgive me my sins and grant me sufficiency in my house and bless me in my livelihood.

6. The prayer after *Wuḍû* :

اَشْهَدُ اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّا اللّٰهُ وَحْدَهٗ لَاشَرِيْكَ لَهٗ

وَاَشْهَدُ اَنَّ مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدُهٗ وَرَسُوْلُهٗ ط اَللّٰهُمَّ

اجْعَلْنِیْ مِنَ التَّوَّابِيْنَ وَاجْعَلْنِیْ مِنَ

الْمُتَطَهِّرِيْنَ ط سُبْحٰنَكَ اللّٰهُمَّ وَبِحَمْدِكَ اَشْهَدُ

اَنْ لَّآ اِلٰهَ اِلَّآ اَنْتَ اَسْتَغْفِرُكَ وَ اَتُوْبُ اِلَيْكَ ط

I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except Allah. He is one. For Him, there is no partner. And I testify that Muḥammad ﷺ is His servant and His Messenger. O Allah, make me one of those who repent and make me one of those who remain clean. I proclaim Your purity,

O Allah, and I praise You. I testify that there is no god worthy of worship except You. I beg Your forgiveness and I turn to You in repentance.

7. The prayer when entering *Masjid* :

اَللّٰهُمَّ افْتَحْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رَحْمَتِكَ، وَسَهِّلْ لِيْ اَبْوَابَ رِزْقِكَ ط

O Allah, open for me the doors of Your mercy. And make easy for me the avenues of sustenance from you.

8. The prayer when coming out of the *Masjid* :

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيْ اَسْئَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ ط

O Allah, I ask You of Your grace.

9. The prayer after the *Adhân* :

اَللّٰهُمَّ رَبَّ هٰذِهِ الدَّعْوَةِ التَّامَّةِ وَالصَّلٰوةِ الْقَائِمَةِ اٰتِ مُحَمَّدَنِ الْوَسِيْلَةَ وَالْفَضِيْلَةَ وَابْعَثْهُ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُوْدَانِ الَّذِيْ وَعَدْتَّهٗ اِنَّكَ لَا تُخْلِفُ الْمِيْعَادَ ط

O Allah, Sustainer of this perfect call and the established prayer, bless Muḥammad ﷺ with (the office of) intercession and superiority and raise him to the most praised station which You have promised to him because You do not go

back on Your promise.

10. Prayer when you begin to eat :

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ وَ عَلٰى بَرَكَةِ اللّٰهِ ط

With the name of Allah and from the blessing of Allah.

11. Prayer when you finish eating :

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْٓ اَطْعَمَنَا وَسَقَانَا وَجَعَلَنَا مِنَ الْمُسْلِمِیْنَ ط

Praise be to Allah who gave us things to eat and drink and raised us among Muslims.

12. The prayer when dressing :

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ الَّذِیْ كَسَانِیْ مَآ اُوَارِیْ بِهٖ عَوْرَتِیْ وَ اَتَجَمَّلُ بِهٖ فِیْ حَیَاتِیْ ط

Praise be to Allah who dressed me with what I cover the parts of my body which it is indecent to expose, and with this I make myself look decent in my life.

13. The prayer when going out of the house:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ تَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَى اللّٰهِ ط

With the name of Allah, I place my trust in Allah.

14. The prayer when coming into the house:

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنِّيۡ اَسۡئَلُكَ خَيۡرَ الۡمَوۡلَجِ وَخَيۡرَ الۡمَخۡرَجِ بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ وَلَجۡنَا وَبِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ خَرَجۡنَا وَعَلَى اللّٰهِ رَبِّنَا تَوَكَّلۡنَا ط

O Allah, I ask You for the best of entry and the best of exit. With the name of Allah, we go in and with the name of Allah, we go out and in Allah, our *Rabb* (Lord), we trust.

15. The prayer when about to sleep:

بِاسۡمِكَ رَبِّيۡ وَضَعۡتُ جَنۡبِيۡ وَبِكَ اَرۡفَعُهٗ اِنۡ اَمۡسَكۡتَ نَفۡسِيۡ فَاغۡفِرۡلَهَا وَاِنۡ اَرۡسَلۡتَهَا فَاحۡفَظۡهَا بِمَا تَحۡفَظُ بِهٖ عِبَادَكَ الصَّالِحِيۡنَ ط اَللّٰهُمَّ قِنِيۡ عَذَابَكَ يَوۡمَ تَبۡعَثُ عِبَادَكَ ط

With Your name, O my *Rabb*, I rest my side and with Your help I shall raise it. If You withhold my soul, please forgive it then. And if You send it back, please protect it then - in the manner You protect Your righteous servants. O Allah, save me from Your punishment on the day You raise Your servants.

16. The prayer before you ride:

بِسۡمِ اللّٰهِ ط

Bismillâh (With the name of Allah).

17. The prayer while on board a ride :

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ ، سُبْحَانَ الَّذِىْ سَخَّرَلَنَا هٰذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لَهٗ مُقْرِنِيْنَ وَ اِنَّآ اِلٰى رَبِّنَا لَمُنْقَلِبُوْنَ۔

Praise be to Allah. Pure is He who made this subservient for us and we were not competent to control it. And, surely, we are to be returned to our *Rabb* (the Lord-Master of the final destination).

18. The prayer when something pleasing happens :

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ الَّذِىْ بِنِعْمَتِهٖ تَتِمُّ الصَّالِحَاتُ۔

Praise be to Allah with whose blessing good things get done.

19. The prayer when something unpleasant happens :

اَلْحَمْدُلِلّٰهِ عَلٰى كُلِّ حَالٍ

Praise be to Allah under all conditions.

20. The prayer when obsessed with doubts and suspicions :

اَعُوْذُ بِاللّٰهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ اٰمَنْتُ بِاللّٰهِ وَرُسُلِهٖ

I seek the protection of Allah against the *Shaytân*. I believe in Allah and His *Rasûl* (Messenger).

21. The prayer against the effects of the evil eye:

Recite and blow breath on the affected:

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ اَللّٰهُمَّ اَذْهِبْ حَرَّهَا وَبَرْدَهَا وَ وَصَبَهَا ط

With the name of Allah. O Allah, remove her temperature and her chill and her discomfort.

A Comprehensive Prayer

The Holy Prophet صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ has also taught us one such prayer which includes all prayers. If this could be recited once after every *Ṣalâh,* it is certainly better.

اَللّٰهُمَّ اِنَّا نَسْئَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِمَا سَاَلَكَ مِنْهُ نَبِيُّكَ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ وَنَعُوْذُبِكَ مِنْ شَرِّ مَا اسْتَعَاذَ مِنْهُ نَبِيُّكَ مُحَمَّدٌ صَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ۔

O Allah, we ask You for everything good which was asked of You by Your prophet, Muḥammad, may Allah bless and protect him, and we seek Your protection against everything evil from which Your protection was sought by Your prophet, Muḥammad, may Allah bless and protect him.

رَبَّنَا لَاتُزِغْ قُلُوبَنَا بَعْدَ اِذْهَدَيْتَنَا وَهَبْ لَنَا مِنْ لَّدُنْكَ رَحْمَةً اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ الْوَهَّابُ . رَبَّنَا تَقَبَّلْ مِنَّآ اِنَّكَ اَنْتَ السَّمِيْعُ الْعَلِيْمُ . وَصَلَّى اللّٰهُ عَلٰى سَيِّدِنَا وَ مَوْلَانَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَّاٰلِهٖ وَاَصْحَابِهٖ وَاُمَّتِهٖ وَبَارَكَ وَسَلَّمَ كَثِيْرًا كَثِيْرًا ؕ

Our Lord, do not let our hearts be misguided after Your having guided us, and give us from out of your own mercy. You, certainly, You are the Giver. O Allah, Our Lord accept (this) from us. You, surely, You are the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing. And, may the blessings of Allah be upon our master and our leader, Muhammad, and on his family and his companions and his community and may they be blessed and protected incessantly.

وَمَا تَوْفِيْقِيْ اِلَّا بِاللّٰهِ

Wa mâ tawfiqî illâ billâh

I am unable to do anything without the will and help of Allah.

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